

Wiltshire Council

Children Select Committee

6 July 2022

DfE Changes – May to June 2022

T Level rollout takes next steps

1. Government publishes draft list of qualifications to be retired due to their overlap with T Levels helping to streamline the options for students [Link](#)

2. **Wiltshire's position:** Wiltshire College, New College Swindon and Bath College are all delivering T-Levels locally with an offer which covers many of the proposed courses to be retired. Our Careers Hub conference took place on the 16th June 2022 and had 49 school careers leaders attend. School careers leaders were provided with a vast array of information regarding the T Level offer for their students to promote in careers sessions and more widely to parents. We were reassured that where there is a need to retain a BTEC this has been fed in to the government consultation.

School food standards: resources for schools

3. Resources to help schools plan and provide healthy food in schools. Change made: Updated 'Checklist for school lunches' so it shows 3 weeks rather than 4 [Link](#)

4. **Wiltshire's position:** Healthy school food is promoted by our local Healthy Schools programme, which links directly to the current national school food standards and related resources. Links to the standards and resources appear on the Healthy Eating page of the Wiltshire Healthy Schools website and within the online Wiltshire Healthy Schools audit. All schools are asked to provide evidence that the meals and other food provided by the school complies with current national school food standards, before achieving Wiltshire Healthy Schools bronze level.

This requirement forms part of a range of other Wiltshire standards that encourage schools to promote healthy weight. The Public Health Team also provide advice and guidance, helping to update our Healthy Schools standards and offering additional support for schools. This support has included the promotion of breakfast clubs, cookery opportunities and the uptake of free school meals. From June 2022 a partnership with Phunky Foods will be supporting 10 targeted schools to further embed healthy lifestyles with a focus on school food.

Increased mental health support for children and young people

5. £10 million to extend senior mental health lead training to reach more schools and colleges [Link](#)

6. **Wiltshire's position:** In 2021 Wiltshire Council, jointly with B&NES and Swindon, developed a new CPD offer of training and network meetings to enable Wiltshire schools and colleges to develop or introduce a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.

[DfE Senior Mental Health Lead Training BSW : Wiltshire Healthy Schools](#)

This local course was assured by the DfE during 2021, enabling eligible settings that attended to claim a national grant of £1,200. In June 2022, following a deep dive review, the DfE graded the CPD offered in Wiltshire 4/5 meaning, “there is a lot of evidence of meeting the quality principle”. While this course is offered by a range of national providers, most settings in Wiltshire that have accessed the training, have chosen to access the support offered by Wiltshire Council.

To date 2 waves of support have been delivered, training leads from 61 Wiltshire schools and colleges. For cohort 3, beginning in September 2022, 41 schools are currently booked. A fourth cohort will begin in January 2023.

The local support has increased the confidence and ability of those in education settings to implement a coordinated approach to mental health; it has enabled Wiltshire schools and colleges to claim over £122,000 from the DfE to implement this work.

Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision

7. A summary of the delivery of commitments in the transforming children and young people’s mental health provision green paper [Link](#)

8. **Wiltshire’s position:** The take up of Senior Mental health grants is 44% in Wiltshire against a SW average of 45% if the Isles of Scilly are excluded.

Wiltshire Council is part of the National (NHS) Futures Mental Health Support Teams Community of Practice working group. The coverage of schools/ colleges participating in **Mental Health Support Teams** programme is as below:

- **Wiltshire: 31%**
- National 27%

The Council’s offer as part of the Green Paper is Five to Thrive, which is Trauma Informed Attachment Resilience (TIAR) and emotion coaching training for schools.

To support emotional well-being and resilience with children and young people, professionals, and communities, for the previous 2 years, funded through the FACT board, professionals have been offered trauma informed training through KCA to be Five to Thrive Champions. We currently have over 80 staff across a range of children’s services trained as champions and the same for school-based staff.

Following on from the Wiltshire Five to Thrive Champions training, all schools in Wiltshire are offered free training for up to 4 members of staff in each school as well as 8 schools being offered whole school pilot training. There is growing evidence that trauma informed practice can help to reduce toxic stress and improve resilience. This training aims to upskill professionals to effectively:

- support secure attachment, self-regulation, and resilience, and be trauma informed
- understand the impact of adult responses to the behaviour of children, young people, and families
- use emotional coaching as an approach to empower children to manage their emotions

Senior mental health lead training

9. Find out how your school or college can apply for a grant and access DfE quality assured training to help develop a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing [Link](#)

10. **Wiltshire's position:** Local authorities have an important role to play in promoting the take-up of senior mental health lead training as part of the local mental health and wellbeing promotion and support offer to schools and colleges. Information released by the DfE in May 2022, enables us to compare grant applications from Wiltshire schools and colleges so far with that of those from other LAs.

[Transforming children and young people's mental health provision - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Wiltshire take up is better than national and regional probably due to our local offer, which most LAs are not providing, and related promotion.

[DfE Senior Mental Health Lead Training BSW : Wiltshire Healthy Schools](#)

Take up of senior mental health leads grant by eligible settings (2021-2022 financial year)

- **Wiltshire: 44%**
- South West: 42%
- England: 35%

Get financial advice for schools

11. A list of financial advisers for schools that need to buy external financial advice and what school leaders should consider before choosing a supplier [Link](#)

12. **Wiltshire's position:** All schools are able to procure financial advice and support from their own preferred provider. The Department for Education hold a central list of organisations that offer support to schools, which includes Wiltshire Council. The list of providers does not come with any recommendations or endorsements, so is simply a list of organisations that can support schools.

All of Wiltshire's maintained schools purchase their support from the Council's Accounting and Budget Support Team as part of a traded service, offered through Right Choice. The Accounting and Budget Support Team comprises a number of highly experienced school's finance professionals and are the 'go to service' for all maintained schools. In testament to the team, Wiltshire's maintained schools receive a comprehensive and excellent level of service and don't need to look elsewhere for financial advice.

There are no plausible reasons for any of Wiltshire's maintained schools to seek financial advice from anyone other than the Accounting and Budget Support Team. Should any school leaders in Wiltshire require financial advice then they would need to consider the cost, the level of service required and the timeframe involved. The Wiltshire Accounting and Budget Support Team offers a responsive and flexible service which delivers best value for schools.

A number of Academy schools also purchase their financial support from the Accounting and Budget Support Team. However, as schools join Multi-Academy Trust's, the support is usually provided by way of a central team at the Trust.

Wiltshire's Team do provide a traded service to support a small number of school's and Trust's outside of the County including Swindon, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and Berkshire.

Education, health and care plans: England 2022

13. Data on the number of children and young people with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan in England [Link](#)

14. **Wiltshire's Position:** the percentage of children and young people with an EHCP in Wiltshire is 4.1%; with the national percentage at 4.0% and the South West percentage at 4.1%. The percentage growth in the number of EHCPs is shown in the table below:

EHC plans/Statements of SEN (percent) for '01- Pupils in all schools, by type of SEN provision- including independent schools and general hospital schools - 2016 to 2022' in England, South West and Wiltshire between 2015/16 and 2021/22

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
South West	Wiltshire	2.7	2.9	3.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.1
England		2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.7	4.0
South West		2.7	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.8	4.1

School capital funding

15. An overview of school capital funding, who it's for, current and past allocations, how it's calculated and spending guidance [Link](#)

16. **Wiltshire's position:** The latest updates include the 2022/23 financial year allocations and the related grant terms for School Condition Funding. Wiltshire has been allocated £2,496,984 to improve the condition of community, VC and Foundation schools. This is a reduction of £407,349 from the 2021/22 allocations. The reduction is partly due to schools converting to academy status as academies receive condition funding direct from the DfE. The methodology for calculating allocations has also changed. The programme of works for 2022/23 was approved by Cabinet in February 2022, however a proportion of the funding is held as contingency to address urgent school repairs throughout the year.

The Council also receives Basic Need Funding for the creation of new pupil places. The DfE allocate this funding based on our pupil number projections. Wiltshire has been allocated £5,384,469 for 2022/23, £0 for 2023/24 and £1,210,612 for 2024/25. In February, Cabinet approved several projects to create additional pupil places and these projects are now progressing. The declining funding allocation is mainly due to the reduction in the birth rate across much of Wiltshire which is reducing the demand for primary school places.

Delivery of air cleaning units and CO2 monitors until 6 May 2022

17. Summary of air cleaning units and CO2 monitor deliveries to state-funded education settings, including early years, schools and further education providers up to 6 May 2022 [Link](#)

18. Wiltshire's position: A Central Government initiative following the repercussions of the pandemic and the future risk mitigation. As of 6 May there were 8017 air cleaning units and 386,059 CO2 monitors delivered across England to state-funded education settings. This release sets out the number of air cleaning units and CO2 monitors delivered by the Department for Education to state-funded education settings up until 6 May 2022.

The data shows the cumulative number of air cleaning units and CO2 monitors delivered using administrative data from its delivery partners. The data covers education settings in England and includes early years, schools and further education providers.

No regional data is available to state Wiltshire's position for this release.

Levelling up premium payments for teachers

19. Mathematics, physics, chemistry and computing teachers can claim payments for teaching in eligible state-funded secondary schools in their first 5 years [Link](#)

20. Wiltshire's position: The Department for Education have established a scheme to enable Early Careers Teachers to claim payments for teaching certain core subjects in eligible state-funded secondary schools in their first 5 years of teaching. The subjects for which the premium can be claimed are

- Mathematics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Computing

The premium can be claimed by teachers from the start of the 2022-23 academic year and provides up to £3,000 in funding. The eligibility criteria to be able to claim the funding include

- Work as a teacher in a state-funded secondary school
- 50% or more of the teaching time must be delivering one of the stated subjects
- Have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)

The scheme will run for the next 3 academic years to support with the recruitment and retention of newly qualified teachers in these key subjects.

Condition Improvement Fund

21. Information for eligible academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided (VA) schools about the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) [Link](#)

22. Wiltshire's position: The Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) is an annual bidding round for eligible academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided (VA) schools to apply for capital funding. The priority for the fund is to address significant condition need, keeping education provider buildings safe and in good working order. This includes funding projects to address health and safety issues, building compliance and poor building condition.

Six Wiltshire schools were successful in the 2022/23 bidding round, including Bishop Wordsworth Grammar School, Chirton Primary School and Bishop Canning's Primary

School. Projects range in size from toilet refurbishments to new blocks to replace old mobiles. We are aware that a number of other bids from Academies in Wiltshire were unsuccessful.

Reception baseline assessment: equality impact assessment

23. Equality impact assessment of the reception baseline assessment (RBA) [Link](#)

24. **Wiltshire's position:** We have had no queries from schools around the reception baseline assessment (RBA) about equality and inclusion. We would agree with the report that children with SEND and EAL (English as an Additional Language) are likely to do less well during this assessment particularly if the child has recently arrived from another country or has had limited pre-school experience. As an LA we do not receive any data on the RBA and so this is difficult to know for sure but as these children reach the end of KS2 there is likely to be some data linking the baseline assessment and their outcome at the end of KS2.

Flexible working in schools

25. Updated non-statutory guidance for employers and staff who want to make arrangements for flexible working [Link](#)

26. **Wiltshire's position:** Right Choice contains all the model policies and procedures that support flexible working and recognises the benefits it can bring to the organisations, teams and individual employees. The policies and procedures are updated on a regular basis.

Keeping children safe in education

27. Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment [Link](#)

28. **Wiltshire's position:** A full review of the new guidance has been undertaken by the Schools Safeguarding Effectiveness team. Training and support for schools has also been updated and headlines shared in the term 6 heads briefing.

KCSIE has changed its terminology from peer-on-peer abuse to child-on-child abuse to better reflect that abuse between children can occur at any age, not just between children of the same age. Staff in schools and colleges are encouraged to challenge inappropriate behaviour between students and to recognise that downplaying certain behaviours can lead to an unsafe culture that normalises abuse.

School's child protection policies need to include explicit information on how the school deals with child-on-child abuse. The policy is expected to reflect the school's approach to online safety and remote education.

All school curriculums should include a focus on preventative education, as well as being targeted to individual pupils needs and vulnerabilities.

New information has been added to explain the impact of domestic abuse including the potential short-term and long-term detrimental impact on children's health, wellbeing, and

ability to learn if they are experiencing domestic abuse at home or within their own intimate relationships

LGBTQ+ Children and Young People: There is a greater emphasis on risks for LGBTQ+ children and/or those that are perceived to be. Staff are reminded that LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the statutory relationships and sex education curriculum.

Governors and proprietors are now expected to fully understand the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead – and a job description is included within the guidance.

Recruitment: KCSIE clarifies that Curriculum Vitae should only be accepted alongside full application forms. It also suggests that schools should consider conducting online searches as part of their due diligence during the recruitment process.

Allegations against staff: The guidance now makes clear that schools and colleges can choose who low-level concerns about staff are reported to, so long as it is clear in their policies. All staff should be aware of how to handle low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing, with KCSIE 2022 being clear that this information should be contained in the staff behaviour policy (also known as the code of conduct).

The DfE Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance has been incorporated into KCSIE 2022. This means that what was non-statutory guidance becomes statutory.

There is increased emphasis on staff being able to identify the indicators of serious youth violence including reducing attendance, changes in friendship groups and performance concerns. Education settings are encouraged to reach out to their local violence reduction

Schools Bill: policy statements

29. Information explaining measures in the Schools Bill, which was introduced to Parliament in May 2022 [Link](#)

30. **Wiltshire's position:** The Academy Trust Standards bill was introduced to parliament in May 2022. It aims to consolidate and simplify the regulatory framework for academies by introducing a 'common rulebook' of statutory trust standards. It means that Academy trusts will be subject to a set of statutory requirements to which they can be held to account by parents and pupils. Although initially the government have said that the standards will initially mirror existing requirements, there will be the introduction of additional requirements over time. It introduces new intervention powers to enhance the government's ability to challenge and resolve concerns regarding management. It also introduces additional requirements regarding attendance policies, complaints processes and a collaborative standard. The aim of the bill is to move to a fully trust-led school system. The academy standards regulation will be debated in Parliament before they come into force, from September 2023 at the earliest. The government are launching a formal regulatory review to establish an appropriate model for regulating a fully academised school system.

Implementing school system reform in 2022 to 2023

31. This implementation plan outlines the next steps following the schools white paper [Link](#)

32. **Wiltshire's position:** The implementation framework outlines the immediate steps to deliver the white paper outcomes, specifically focussing on the academic year 2022/2023. Phase one is to support EIA's (Education Investment Areas) of which Wiltshire has **not** been

identified. It also identifies 'test and learn projects' to set up new LA-established MATs (multi-academy trust) – for which Wiltshire is registering. The framework aims to support MATs in considering how to grow and develop, maintained schools and single academy trusts looking for information on joining a MAT. LA's to work with the government to further develop local school systems and Dioceses to explore their approach in developing diocesan and mixed article MATs.

EIA's form part of the governments 'levelling up agenda'. 55 EIAs have been identified through the lowest rates of combined KS2 and KS4 attainment, existing Opportunity Areas or areas identified for additional school improvement support. Within this a subset of 2424 areas will become priority EIAs. Within EIAs schools judged as 'less than Good' (subject to consultation and parliamentary approval) may be issued with an academy order.

New LA-established MATs. Wiltshire is preparing to register interest in establishing an LA-established MAT. We have consulted our maintained schools as to whether in principle, they would join the trusts and have had a favourable response.

Converting remaining schools and moving to a fully trust led system in a local area. The white paper announced, subject to parliamentary approval, new powers enabling the secretary of state to bring LA maintained schools into the academy system where requested by the LA. The government are inviting expressions of interest to LAs and dioceses who wish to work with them to move at scale to a fully trust led system, this may include LA-established MATs where there is insufficient capacity of established strong trusts.

The government have established a new Regions Group in the department for education (September 2022) led by nine regional directors. Each regional director will be supported by and advisory board. This replaces the Regional Schools Commissioner role.

The White paper outlines each MAT having at least 10 schools or 7,500 pupils.

The role of the LA. The white paper describes a changing role for LAs – 'championing the best interests if children in their area'. LAs will be the focal point for place based planning.

We are currently working with our maintained schools to support them in understanding the implications of the white paper.

Pupil absence in schools in England: autumn term 2021

33. Absence statistics on the levels of overall, authorised and unauthorised absence in state-funded schools [Link](#)

34. **Wiltshire's position:** Absence Data published for Autumn Term 2021 by DfE

	National Absence	South West Absence	Wiltshire Absence
Overall Absence	6.9%	7.4%	7.1%
Primary	5.7%	5.9%	5.6%
Secondary	8.2%	9.1%	8.8%
Special	12.8%	13.4%	13.2%

Persistent Absence (PA) – pupils with less than 90% attendance

DfE published data Autumn term 2021

	National PA (by enrolment)	South West PA (by enrolment)	Wiltshire PA (by enrolment)
Primary	19.5%	20.8%	19%
Secondary	27.7%	31.6%	31.2%
Special	39.4%	42.4%	42.5%

Wiltshire primary schools have performed similarly or better for both overall absence and persistent absence compared to national and regional data. Wiltshire secondary schools have performed better than other schools in the South West region for overall absence and persistent absence but are not performing as well when compared to national data. Wiltshire special schools have performed better than other schools in the South West region for overall absence but the persistent absence data for Wiltshire special schools is higher.

Attendance has been impacted by Covid 19, and case rates in the South West have been higher than national during parts of this academic year. It should be noted that Wiltshire special schools had more absence recorded (3.3%) due to Covid 19 illness than national (2.7%) and regional (2.6%) schools. Covid 19 illness impacted Wiltshire primary and secondary schools at the same rate as for schools nationally, but there was less impact than that felt by primary and secondary schools in the South West.

Unauthorised absence (that for which the school has not agreed the absence) is lower than both national and South West regional data across all schools in Wiltshire, which is positive. The Education Welfare Service continues to respond to unauthorised absence, taking legal interventions where appropriate to do so and to support schools with their strategic approaches to managing absence.

Pupil Premium

35. Updated 'Pupil premium: overview' to reflect that free school meal eligibility now includes children in all households with no recourse to public funds [Link](#)

36. Wiltshire's position: Schools and not the LA claim for the Pupil premium. If eligible, then the pupils will also be eligible for the Covid recovery premium too. The schools are required to record these pupils as part of their census returns to the DfE, after the families have completed a self-declaration to confirm eligibility. There is a closing date of the 8th July for claims.

No data is available for Wiltshire School applications, and no enquiries have been received from schools in Wiltshire to date.

The eligibility criteria is listed as below:

Eligible groups

These groups include, but may not be limited to children of:

- Zambrano carers
- families who have no recourse to public funds with a right to remain in the UK on grounds of private and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights
- families receiving support under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 who are also subject to a no recourse to public funds restriction
- a subset of failed asylum seekers supported under Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Chen carers
- families holding a [BN\(O\) passport](#)
- spousal visa holders
- work visa holders
- student visa holders
- those with no immigration status

The maximum income threshold differs based on your location and the number of children that your family has.

Thousands more school and sixth form places to be created

37. Up to 75 new free schools including sixth forms, specialist and alternative provision [Link](#)

38. **Wiltshire's position:** Wiltshire is intending to submit a bid for a free school. The closing date is 7 July 2022.

Reviews of education, health and care (EHC) plans: proposed timescales

39. We're seeking views on the deadline for a local authority issuing proposals to amend an education, health and care plan following a review [Link](#)

40. **Wiltshire's position:** This consultation closes on the 12 August 2022. The SEND Board will be submitting a response. The consultation is seeking views on 2 points:

Local authorities have various duties over when and how they must review an individual's Education, Health and Care plan. We are consulting on whether they should:

- have an additional four weeks after review meetings to finalise any changes they propose to a plan; and
- have to circulate material for a review meeting a week earlier than currently.

A new approach to area SEND inspections

40. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission seek your views on proposed changes to the way they jointly inspect area SEND arrangements from 2023 [Link](#)

41. **Wiltshire's position:** This consultation closes on 11 September 2022. Ofsted and CQC have identified the following weaknesses during inspections:

- flaws, inconsistencies, and delays in the identification of children and young people's needs

- not enough of a system-wide focus on providing high-quality universal education, health, and care services
- a lack of clarity about who is responsible for what between organisations, resulting in fractures in the way that professionals in these services work together

The aim is to introduce a new framework to promote further improvement in the SEND system by:

- focusing not just on whether statutory obligations have been met but on the impact that a local area partnership's SEND arrangements has on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people
- strengthening accountability and driving continuous improvement by introducing:
 - an ongoing cycle of inspections, which includes full inspections, monitoring visits and annual engagement meetings
 - 3 inspection outcomes, which provide clearer information about how an area is performing, what needs to improve and who is accountable
 - an expectation that all areas produce and publish a strategic plan for SEND, which is updated following inspection
- gathering more evidence directly from children and young people and their families, ensuring that their views and experiences are central to our inspections
- looking more closely at arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision
- including social care inspectors in our inspection teams, so that we can gain a more holistic view of the impact of SEND services in an area

There are 9 proposals:

1. Focusing more on impact
2. Criteria for evaluation
3. Inspection outcomes
4. Making recommendations in reports
5. Updating and publishing strategic plans following an inspection
6. Gathering more evidence directly from children and young people and their families
7. Including alternative provision
8. Introducing monitoring inspections
9. Introducing engagement meetings